

# HIS WORD OF HONOR.

A Tale of the Blue and the Gray.

BY E. WERNER.

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## CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"I hope, sir, that you are not venturing upon a jest with me, the justice of the peace! How does it happen that you have anything to do with such matters? Who is this Roland, and what does Mr. Harrison say to the affair?"

"Nothing at all, because for the moment he is in a very uncomfortable situation, which prevents any protest. But, as to my authority, allow me to show it to you."

The barrel of a revolver was suddenly presented to the old gentleman, who, with a cry of terror, fled to the recess of the window, leaving both dignity and dinner in the lurch. The clerk, on the contrary, who had listened with mouth wide open, sat as if paralyzed with terror.

"Help! Murder! Robbers!" shouted Mr. Thompson; but terror so stifled him that the cry sounded a piteous whimper.

"Don't scream, sir," said Maxwell, quietly. "We can come to a friendly agreement. As I said, the point in question is merely a wedding. The bridegroom is my friend, Lieutenant William Roland. I have the pleasure of presenting myself to you as Doctor John Maxwell, both of the Union army, which will arrive here in a few hours."

"The whole Union army?" exclaimed Thompson, with a fresh outburst of horror.

"No; not the whole army—there would scarcely be room for it on the plantation—but our regiment, I told you during our drive that the troops were marching in this direction. But we desire, for certain reasons, to have the ceremony performed first. The bride and groom are ready, and I hope you will be, too. I place myself at your disposal as a witness, your clerk will be the second witness, and I suppose you brought the marriage contract with you. We can use it at once."

"Unprecedented! Impossible!" groaned the justice, who now came forward again. His clerk had recovered from his stupor so far as to fly from the range of the revolver. He

she must be ready to be married at once.

He had at last entered with the utmost zeal into Maxwell's bold plan, which had at first seemed out of the question. It was really the only way to secure his bride and prevent any later intrigues of Edward. He had an inviolate right to claim his wife. Happen what might in Springfield, she belonged to him alone. The brief delay which would be caused by the ceremony was really not so dangerous as it seemed. Captain Wilson could hardly have reached the city, and the escort would not arrive before evening. The doctors were not expected for several hours, and as for the servants, Maxwell's judgment of them proved correct.

## CHAPTER XI.

From the moment they discovered the identity of the two strangers all hostility was at an end. They belonged to the ranks of the "liberators." Besides, they loved their young mistress as much as they feared in Edward the stern master. The last few months, during which he had had the reins of government, had shown the whole household what was to be expected from the new master. Now he had mysteriously vanished. Perhaps he might even be dead. But not a hand stirred to seek or aid him.

Besides, practical John, who never lost sight of any possibility, had taken care to prevent danger from the few white men who were acting as overseers in the fields. He had summoned the whole establishment, and briefly stated that the Union army was marching in that direction; that one regiment would arrive that evening and hold every human being in Springfield to a strict account, if a hair of his head or Lieutenant Roland's was harmed. The composure with which he related this fairy tale made a strong impression, and the rapidity of all these incidents bewildered them. No one ventured to raise an objection when Maxwell ordered the fastest horses to be harnessed and the carriage brought round; but all hastened to obey, while the doctor

"The names are still missing. Please insert them. Mr. William Roland—Miss Florence Harrison! There, now we can begin."

The magistrate had so far recovered that he could commence the ceremony, which was performed very quickly, but in strict legal form. The usual questions were asked and answered, the signatures were affixed, and in less than ten minutes the wedding was over. William, deeply moved, clasped his young wife to his heart.

Maxwell glanced toward the door, where Ralph had appeared during the last moment, but remained standing motionless in order not to interrupt the ceremony. The doctor exchanged a few words with him in a low tone, then turned to the young couple.

"Mrs. Roland, please go to your father. William, you can accompany your wife. There is no fear that your presence will disturb the sick man—don't leave her alone now!"

A significant glance emphasized the words. William understood that the last moments of Mr. Harrison's life were at hand, and putting his arm around his wife he led her to her dying father.

(To Be Continued.)

## How a Boer Signs His Name.

From the London Mail. The Boer may be fairly good at handling a rifle, but he is sadly deficient in his ability to handle a pen. When the average Boer has to attach his name to a document an air of importance pervades his dwelling for several hours. The children are constantly chided, the patient "vrouw" has a preoccupied look and the husband himself puffs even more vigorously than usual at his pipe. Eventually a corner of the table is cleared and carefully wiped. The family Bible is placed in position and the sheet of paper requiring the signature placed upon it. An expectant silence falls upon the company. "Stille!" cries the wife. "Stille, kindste, papa gaet sein naam teken." ("Hush, children, father is about to sign his name.") The family stands round open-mouthed, and all eyes gaze expectantly upon the paper. With arms bared for the fray, and with pen carefully poised, the Boer bends to his task. The pen is gripped firmly between his horny fingers. In thick, ungainly scratches, and with slow and painful motion, the pen begins to work, and at the end of it may be four minutes, the deed is accomplished.

## Half-Way House of Big Birds.

Near St. Charles, Mo., is a great sandbar, called Pelican bend, which projects into the Missouri river, and for some unknown reason it is a favorite stopping place for the numerous flocks of pelicans that migrate north and south every year. It has been noticed that regularly each fall on Sept. 4 they begin to arrive. They remain till cold weather and then pass on south. In the spring they return to the bend, remain a short time, and then proceed north. It may be that in the shallows around this sandbar are quantities of fish of which the awkward birds are fond, for they live almost entirely on fish. A pelican loves nothing better than to wade in shallow water, where schools of minnows and small fish are gathered, and to scoop them up in its great elastic pouch that hangs under its lower bill. These big-bodied and short-legged birds are clumsy enough on land, but they have enormous webbed feet, and widespread wings. So in water or air they move rapidly, and they seem never to tire of swimming or flying.

## Earth a Pyramid in Shape.

Since the earth was first formed many theories have been advanced as to its shape and the process of its formation, but no one until our day ever maintained that its form was that of a huge pyramid. Centuries ago Pythagoras and Aristotle declared that it was spherical. Anaximander that it was shaped like a column, Democritus that it was a concave disc and very much resembled a huge porringer. Empedocles and Anaximenes that it was a plane disk, and Xenophanes that it had roots like a tree, which spread in all directions far into the infinite. Now comes J. Greene, an English scientist, and a government official in the Sandwich islands, with the bold announcement that all these ancient theories, as well as the modern ones, are utterly baseless, since, according to him, the earth has the form of a triangular pyramid, or, in other words, of a regular tetrahedron, with the apex at the south pole and the base at the north.

## Obeded the Orders.

New York Evening Sun: The story of the green servant girl who boiled a watermelon is more than rivaled by the story of the experienced girl, who boiled the plum pudding. She was the sort of young person who more than anticipated any directions with the assurance of her knowledge on the subject, so that the woman of the household gave her but one important hint about the Christmas pudding. "Be careful not to let it boil down," she said; "put plenty of water in the kettle, and keep putting more in as it boils out." "Yes'm," was the response. There was no doubt but that she obeyed that injunction to the very letter. She had put in plenty of water and she had added more from time to time. But another little item she had neglected—she had not put the pudding into a bag.

## His Favorite Barber.

Grymes—"Why do you always go to that particular barber?" Ukerdek—"He is bald as an egg." Grymes—"What of that?" Ukerdek—"He cannot advise me to use a hair restorer."

## BRITON AND THE BOER

### MOUNTAIN WALLS PROTECT THE BURGHERS.

The Natural Defenses of the Transvaal Would Test the Genius of the Greatest Commander That Ever Drew a Sword.

No correct understanding of the task or position of the English army in South Africa can be had without a knowledge of the geography and topography of the Transvaal and Orange Free State—especially of the border lines of these two republics. The fighting and tactics of the last two months have been about Ladysmith, Mafeking, Kimberley, Modder river, Tugela river, Coleridge, Belmont and Stormberg.

The boundaries of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, which the English must cross before they can conquer, are formed by the Mkuai, Umvoti and Tugela rivers, the Kathlamba or Drakenberg mountains, and the Modder and Orange rivers. At every point on the southern, southeastern and southwestern approaches to the republic there is either a river to be crossed, an open plateau to be marched over or a plateau and mountain wall to be scaled. The Mkuai, Umvoti and Tugela rivers sweep across the southeastern border of the Transvaal, the Tugela forming a barrier to the approach to Ladysmith, Dundee and Majuba hill. The mountain elevations here range from 1,200 feet above the level of the sea to more than 11,000 feet. This is in Natal land, where British occupy the plain approaches and the Boers the mountain heights. The Tugela is deep, swift, has slippery banks and is exposed to gun fire from the hill and mountain crests. In this neighborhood and also at Colenso, on the Tugela, there are peaks like Mount Aux Gources, 11,158 feet in height; Mount Melanie, 7,900 feet in height; Majuba, 7,600 feet; Champagne Castle, 10,357 feet, and Giant's Castle, 9,657 feet. The Boers are familiar with every trail of the ranges, have excellent artillery at the passes, and guns that command formidable places in the streams. Topographically the English are in the position of a man who must fight uphill over 150 miles before he passes Majuba and enters the Transvaal valleys. His opponent may always fire down upon him. The Drakenberg range forms part of the southern boundary of the Transvaal, and nearly all of the eastern boundary of the Orange Free State. At Buttha Buthe, Ladybrand, Thloti, Ongeluka Nek and Zastron the elevations run from 1,000 to 8,000 feet, while the passes are few, the streams usually swollen with floods, and the trails obscure and misleading. It is evident that the English are without mountain guides and cannot rely on the loyalty of the Natal Dutch to give them accurate information. In the Coleridge district, due south of the Orange Free State, the Orange river forms a barrier of no small size. The stream is one of the noble South African waterways, often impassable, and well guarded on the Boer side by plateaus and small ranges. A second obstacle to the approach to der river breaks away from the Orange south of Kimberley and forms a second obstacle to the approach to the diamond fields. About the Modder river and Kimberley the elevations reach a height of 1,000 feet and are controlled by the Boers. The English column of Gen. Buller is at Tugela river; Methuen is at Modder river, White is cooped up in Ladysmith, Gatacre is at Sterkstroom, and Kimberley is besieged. Topographically Buller has a climb before him averaging 5,000 feet; Methuen's climb will average 2,500 feet; White has Boer guns looking down on him from an elevation of 500 feet, and Kimberley is commanded by guns from 600 to 700 feet above its plane.

If this outer prospect is not inviting the inner topographical formation of the Transvaal is less so. The inner rim is known as the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld and Quathlamba ranges. The highest point is the Mauchberg, 8,725 feet. There are several ridges known as Verzemelberg, Randberg, Slaugaplesberg and Komatberg. These fall precipitously eastward toward the Lilcomba range, which maintains a mean elevation of 2,000 feet.

## One-Armed Pianist.

Philadelphia Record: A musical genius in the shape of a one-armed piano player made his appearance at a Norristown musicale the other night, and scored an instantaneous success. Besides having a gentle touch, he played with great expression, and could undoubtedly make some of the two-armed Paderewskies look to their laurels. Dremmy waltzes are his forte. When playing marches his educated member dashes from one end of the piano to the other like mad, and he presents rather a comical sight. Although he renders everything from cakewalks to the Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana," he doesn't know a note of music, but plays everything by ear. This unique player's name is William Everly, and his boast is that he has not been in one town more than two days in the last ten years. He has an expert advance agent, who makes it a point to get acquainted among the upper classes, and always manages to have dates ahead for the one-armed musical wonder.

## Playing the Game Correctly.

Mamma Ethel, what do you mean by shouting in that disgraceful fashion? See how quiet Willie is. Ethel—Of course he's quiet; that's our game. He's papa coming home late, and I'm you.—Stray Stories.

## TO KNOW DEADLY SNAKES.

Signs by Which Their Character May Be Recognized.

To distinguish between venomous and harmless snakes is easy in practice, but it is difficult to explain in words alone, as there is no one external characteristic which distinguishes them. It is rather a peculiar varying union of many separate marks that brands the dangerous reptile.

Generally speaking, all snakes may be divided into two great classes—those which have the head covered with numerous small scales and those which have it covered with large, regularly fitted plates. Leaving out the elapidae and the poisonous sea of snakes, with which the hunter will have nothing to do, all snakes with small head scales move about by night, and those with large plates on the head by day. This may be known by their eyes, for the first have vertical pupils like the cat's, while those of the latter are generally circular in form. The long, active day snakes, gliding about from bush to bush, or hurriedly taking refuge beneath some protruding rock or tree stump, is harmless. Even should he lie coiled in the sunshine, he will flee from approaching danger. But a serpent nicely coiled in some secluded nook, which instead of fleeing gathers himself closer together, is most probably dangerous, particularly if he be more or less marked with a suggestion of irregular cross bars of whitish or dirty yellow and darker brown or blackish. This is the characteristic coloring of our dangerous snakes, the rattler, the copperhead and the moccasin. The following points embrace all the peculiarities of our American vipers, and the last two are especially noteworthy as the crowning proofs of venom: 1. Moving about at dusk or by night, generally on the ground, and very rarely ascending trees or bushes. 2. Seldom flying in alarm, but rather coiling for defense. 3. Colors generally subdued in tint, with a semblance of irregular crossbars of lighter and darker shades. 4. Tall short, body stout, neck thin, head flat and very broad, especially behind. 5. Scales keeled—i. e., each scale has a ridge down the middle, which gives the skin a rough appearance like a rasp. 6. Head covered with small scales, sometimes larger over the eyes or nose. 7. Eyes with vertical pupils like a cat's. 8. Two pits or holes between the eyes and nose, suggesting four nostrils. 9. Two long, curved, perforated fangs in the upper jaw just in front of the eye, one on either side, and so hinged that they lie backward, hidden from view in a membranous sheath, but erectile at will. Some of the first seven peculiarities may be found in harmless snakes, but it is only in the viper that they are united.—Outing.

## VERDI WAS CLEVER.

Great artistic achievements of any sort are seldom found with good business faculty and strong common sense, and, therefore, some of the greatest musicians have simply starved, because they either would not condescend, or did not know how to tickle the popular fancy. The following story of Verdi shows that he is a sharp man of business as well as a musician.

Just as he was on the point of finishing "Il Trovatore," he received a visit from an intimate friend, who was one of the ablest of musicians and critics. Verdi allowed him to look at the score and to run over the chorus on the pianoforte. "What do you think of that?" asked the composer. "Trash, utter trash," said the connoisseur. Verdi rubbed his hands and chuckled gleefully. "Now look at this, and this," he continued. "Rubbish, rubbish," said his friend, who to his utter bewilderment next found the composer embracing him in a transport of joy. "What do you mean?" asked he in amazement.

"My dear friend," replied Verdi, "I have been composing a popular opera. I resolved that it should please everybody except great judges and classicalists like yourself. Had I pleased them I should have pleased no one else. What you say assures me of success. In three months 'Il Trovatore' will be sung, shouted, whistled and played on every barrel organ throughout the length and breadth of Italy."

## When Justice Hawkins Did a Favor.

Baron Brampton, when Mr. Justice Hawkins, was accosted at a railway station once by a rough fellow who seemed anxious to help with the Justice's luggage. Struck by his friendliness, Sir Henry said, "You seem very desirous to assist me." "That's what I am, sir," replied the man, "you see, sir, you once did me a good turn." "Yes?" said the judge. "When and where, pray?" "When ye 'ung Crooked Billy," replied the man. "Me and Billy once was pals, and we fell out, and Billy said as 'ow next time 'e clapped eyes on me 'e'd do for me with a knife. I knowed Billy, and knowed 'e'd do as he said, and so 'e would if you 'adn't 'ung him in time. So I like to do you a good turn, too, Sir 'Eary."

## Dreams.

Mr. Tucker—"I think I shall give up my business, my dear. I might as well have some good out of my money." Mrs. Tucker—"Oh, not yet, Samuel! But when one of us dies I shall give up housekeeping and see a little of the world."—Brooklyn Life.

## Considerate of Others' Feelings.

Ada—"It is very beautiful, but I don't think you should accept so many presents from him. Edith—Well, until he offers himself, I prefer not to hurt his feelings.—Brooklyn Life.

## THE LAZY MAN.

ISLES WHERE LABOR IS UNNECESSARY

And Where the People Grow Fat on the Fruits That Nature Has Plentifully Provided—No Poverty and No Crime.

There are places on the earth where a man may live comfortably all his life without doing any work, says Lemuel Cooper, who was born on the island of Ruatan, one of the Bay group, a little chain or key lying some 30 miles off the coast of Spanish Honduras. To starve there would be simply impossible; it would be like trying to drown a fish. We have no beggars and no pauper class to maintain. There has never been a murder, theft is unknown and locks are unnecessary. Last year our mortality was one-fourth of one per cent.

Ruatan, continued Mr. Cooper, is 40 miles long and three miles wide. It has a population of about 3,000 people, mostly Carib Indians, and I doubt whether there is in all the world a more beautiful and prolific spot. The people are lazy simply because they don't have to work. Coconuts form their mainstay and there is nothing easier to grow. To start a grove one merely burns off a piece of land and plants the nuts in rows 20 feet apart. In from four to five years' time the trees are a dozen feet high and beginning to bear and after that the planter is fixed for life. He may bid adieu to care. The nuts are never picked, but as they mature they drop off, and this shower of fruit goes on steadily month after month all the year around. How long a tree will bear nobody can say, but there are some on the island that are known to be over half a century old and are still dropping their harvest of nuts.

When the native needs something at the store all he has to do is to gather together some nuts and trade them for what he wishes. He hauls them by striking them on a stake driven into the ground and a man can easily haul 2,000 a day in that manner. My two brothers and myself shipped 1,000,000 nuts last year, and the total shipment from the islands would average about 8,000,000. Elsewhere the nut is a valuable by-product and is manufactured into mats and brushes and all sorts of fiber ware, but no attempt has ever been made to utilize it on the Bay islands. Thousands upon thousands of dollars' worth of material has thus been allowed to rot on the ground. Everybody admits that a fiber works would be a profitable industry, "but what is the use?" the people say. "Haven't we everything we want already?" It is the indolence that gets in the blood. The longer you live at Ruatan the less you approve of toil.

Other fruits grow just as easily as the coconut and the only reason why that especially is grown is because it furnishes an easy crop, for which there is always a ready market. We have plenty of bananas, oranges, mangoes, plums and pineapples, and they are all delicious. They grow wild, without the slightest cultivation, and all one has to do is to pick them. Vegetables are equally prolific, and our native yams easily average 40 to 50 pounds in weight. A piece of cane stuck in the ground takes root and renews itself perennially for years. A stranger who comes to the islands is invariably amazed at the prodigality of nature and the apathy of the natives—that is before the lazy feeling gets into his blood. "Why don't you grow this?" and "Why don't you cultivate that?" he asks. The natives simply smile. "Why not take things easy and be happy?"

The next island to Ruatan is Utilia, which has a population of about 800 and is touched by several steamship lines. There is a good deal of trading from the island along the Honduran coast and the owners of the larger sloops and schooners make considerable money that way, but the main business is in coconuts. The first island of the chain is called Bonaco and has about the same population as Utilia. Then there are two very small islands—Barbat and Morat.

The strangers who occasionally drift to the Bay islands, through one chance and another, rarely leave. They are like the lotus eaters in Tennyson's poem. The American consul at present is Mr. Johnson, who comes from Wisconsin. He was delighted with the spot and sent at once for his wife and daughter. They are all there together now and insist that they will never leave. The climate, by the way, is singularly equable. The thermometer has never been known to fall below 66 or to rise above 88. Being part of Spanish Honduras, we are, of course under the government of that republic, but we are too far away to ever be disturbed by the storms of revolution, and at present things are peculiarly serene.

The Bay islands have the distinction of having the largest sharks in the world in their waters. They are found three or four miles from the coast and frequently grow to a length of 50 feet.

## Perquisite of the Sailors.

It has been estimated that any crack steamer leaving New York takes with it bouquets worth from \$5,000 to \$15,000. In a few hours the passengers begin to feel queer and send the flowers out of their rooms. Then they are collected by the stewards, carefully sorted over and put into the ice-house and when the vessel reaches her English port they are sold and the profits divided among the men.

A loafer never allows himself to get out of practice.



LEAVING BOTH DIGNITY AND DINNER.

too, took refuge in the window recess, where he hid with his employer in trembling.

"May I request you to let me see the document?" asked Maxwell.

"But it contains the name of Edward Harrison," said the magistrate, desperately.

"We'll erase it and put William Roland in its place."

"But that won't do."

"It must do! I most courteously beg you for it."

A movement of the revolver gave this courtesy the necessary emphasis. Mr. Thompson tried to hide behind his clerk, and the latter, with a trembling hand, drew out a paper which he held like a shield toward the oppressor.

"Space for the names has been left," he stammered. "They were to be filled in at Springfield."

"Excellent! Then there is nothing to be erased. Calm yourself, Mr. Thompson. I assure you that I have the highest regard for you, and have told my friend so much about you that he, too, holds you in great esteem. Permit me again to apologize for disturbing you, but there is nothing to prevent your continuing your meal as soon as the ceremony is over. So, if you please—"

The gentlemen did not look as if they were inclined to follow. They left the window with evident reluctance, but they did leave it and, under Maxwell's escort, went to the drawing-room.

Here they found William with Florence, the latter half-bewildered by the rapidity with which events had followed each other. While waiting in terrible anxiety for news, her imagination conjuring up the most terrible possibilities, Roland suddenly stood before her, free and unharmed, and in hurried words told her that

proceeded to exchange the courtesies already mentioned with his esteemed friend, Mr. Thompson.

Florence was sitting on a sofa, with William standing beside her—both in the greatest agitation and excitement—when the gentlemen entered. Doctor Maxwell, however, was calmness itself, when he made the necessary introductions.

"Lieutenant Roland—the bridegroom—you already know the bride, Miss Harrison. William, I have the pleasure of presenting to you the justice of the peace, Mr. Thompson, who, with the utmost readiness to oblige, instantly consented to gratify your wish."

William looked at the magistrate, whose pale face and shaking knees distinctly showed how he had been induced to show this vaunted obligingness. The affair, which afforded his friend a malicious satisfaction, was extremely painful to him.

"Calm yourself, sir," he said, approaching him. "You are perfectly safe. Neither you nor your companion needs fear. I deeply regret that we were forced to put the request in such a form, but the circumstances compelled it. As soon as the wedding is over, you can return to the city."

The old gentleman again breathed freely. He had imagined the lieutenant a far more terrible personage than the doctor, and now he proved to be the more humane of the two. But Mr. Thompson preferred to place himself close to Miss Harrison as quickly as possible. If he stood close by her side, no one could fire at him.

Meanwhile, Maxwell had given the marriage contract, which had been handed to him, a brief, yet thorough scrutiny, and now again laid it on the table.

"Everything is correct!" he said.